

# Seattle's Central Waterfront Plan

## Summary of Public Forum #2

**Friday, November 7, 2003**

Odyssey Maritime Discovery Center, Waterlink Gallery, Pier 66

### Welcome and Introductions

- Welcome to all from David Spiker, on behalf of Design and Planning Commissions
- Moderator, John Howell, ran through day's agenda and introduced people
- John Rahaim quickly reviewed City's waterfront planning process
- Recap of Forum 1 by Jeanne Krikawa & Commissioners

### Panel Discussion

Representatives from the five discussion groups that met during the fall summarized the outcomes of their respective discussions. They were joined by the City of Seattle project manager for the Alaskan Way Viaduct and Seawall Project to respond to questions and comments from Forum participants.

#### Group #1: Urban Design, Public Space, Historic Preservation, Arts and Culture

Michael Woodland

- Group dealt with ethereal issues – heterogeneity and authenticity, ecosystem of activity
- Issues are hard to define but critical to success of the waterfront
- Heterogeneity – variety and a spectrum of uses and people
- Authenticity – serves locals as well as tourists
- Connection to place – how is this waterfront different from other waterfronts?
- Sparkle – vitality, funkiness, not too monotone
- Access – not just physical but also sensory and psychological access
- Working waterfront – or a waterfront that works
- Scale – a waterfront that is scaled to human attention span
- Preservation of piers – historically significant to waterfront
- Implementation and development

#### Group #2: Transportation

Lesley Bain

- Five discussion topics are all very intertwined
- Importance of getting to the waterfront
- Waterfront is by its nature multi-modal
- Opportunity to rethink the waterfront in terms of its transportation
- Coexistence of modes – boats ferries trains trolleys trucks cars bicycles pedestrians
- Some modes get along well others don't

- What needs to be separated?
- What things can be overlapped (perhaps trolleys and cars)?
- Need to prioritize between modes
- Single occupancy vehicles (SOV's) especially those not headed to the waterfront are a low priority
- How can they be de-prioritized?
- Waterfront is linear, but not entirely linear
- It is a series of places
- Waterfront varies in terms of transportation and urban design
- South of the ferry, central waterfront, north waterfront
- Challenge to connect the waterfront to the city
- Would like more waterside transportation
- Need to understand economics of transportation systems
- Waterfront is major utility corridor

### **Group #3: Natural Environment and Ecology**

Steve Nicholas

- What are the key functions of the waterfront?
  - transportation corridor, economic engine, neighborhood
  - waterfront as an ecosystem needs to be considered as a central function of the waterfront
- Opportunity
  - lot of activity going on now and a lot in the future
  - lot that we know now that we didn't know when viaduct and seawall were built
  - know more about relationship between pavement in a drainage basin and water quality and salmon habitat
  - know more about vehicle emissions and human health
  - know more about how to do things
  - factors add up to opportunity to improve ecological health of waterfront
- Net improvement of water and sediment quality in Elliot Bay
  - ways to emulate what was the natural flow of storm water in Elliot Bay
  - natural systems drainage and bio-filtration
- Net increase in high quality habitat for fish and wildlife
  - uninterrupted fish passage along the waterfront
  - need hard look at over-water structures – overall reduction of over-water structures
  - proactive about finding ways to restore habitat
- Net improvement in air quality – and net reduction in green house gas
  - will have a lot to do with transportation
  - have to do with how neighborhoods are developed – i.e. high density housing, bike access
- Access to the waterfront
- Greenway along the waterfront
- Use of environmentally responsible materials along the waterfront
- Environmentally responsible operation of ferries and cruise ships
- Reduction of noise pollution
- Meeting or exceeding all environmental regulations

#### **Group #4: Economic Development, Tourism and Trade**

Tom Tierney

- Can't have economically viable waterfront without meeting other concerns
- Not one single neighborhood - variety of neighborhoods on the waterfront
- Working waterfront to the south
- Parkland at the far north
- Need to recognize different functions of different neighborhoods
- Uses change constantly
  - Waterfront may change more than any other neighborhood in the city
  - Only in the 60's that container operations began
  - Waterfront changes with global changes
  - Responds to local changes
  - Need to be flexible
- Central functions that the waterfront performs
  - Freight mobility
  - Connection between industrial areas
  - Allows us connection onto the water – different types of boats
- Terminal 46
  - Contentious issue
  - Could be taken out of maritime use
  - Feeling that if maritime use is lost will not likely return
  - Deep harbor is rare resource
  - Other view that we should be intensifying our container terminal use – to handle same volume and use least land possible

#### **Group #5: Neighborhoods, Community, Housing, Social Services and Stewardship**

Catherine Stanford

- Planning for the long term
- Don't try to find quick fixes
- Provide framework for future development
- Waterfront is for everyone - diversity of uses and users
- Pedestrian mobility
  - Pedestrian oriented infrastructure
  - Wide sidewalks – frequent safe crossings – pedestrian scale development
  - But keep in mind critical transportation uses important for economic vitality
- Develop mix of uses
  - Develop authentic uses
  - Places and activities that are used by locals
  - If it is used by locals tourists will come
  - More of a neighborhood feel
  - Provide uses for all seasons and weather and all times of day – 18 hour place
  - Public uses on waterfront – restrooms etc
  - Uses that don't require spending money
  - Mix of housing
- Open space - expect continued density in city - waterfront could be open space resource
- East-west connections

- How neighborhoods reach into waterfront and vice versa
- There are huge barriers – but important to make physical and visual connections

### **Alaskan Way Viaduct and Seawall Project**

Bob Chandler

- Need to find out the future direction of the waterfront and connections to the city
- Transportation decision impacts the rest of the waterfront
- Not a static project – continue to make changes
- After preferred alternative is selected will produce final environmental impact statement
- Looking at life expectancy of 60-75-100 years need to build in flexibility

### **Questions and comments**

#### **Seismic issues?**

- viaduct project will be built to site specific seismic standards

#### **Replacement of parking, during viaduct construction period and final solution?**

- more parking on the waterfront than people think, but not well located
- Need better connections to make better use of existing parking
- There are long-term and short-term parking issues
- viaduct project is especially sensitive to short-term parking
- different schemes allow different amounts of short-term parking on waterfront
- need to look at relationship between parking and natural environment
- need to look at demand side of parking equation
- find ways to reduce need for parking and parking directly on the waterfront
- think about how and where we provide parking on the waterfront
- What is best place economically and environmentally

#### **Function of central waterfront as a transportation corridor – important that plans consider waterfront as transit corridor**

- Streetcar not as antique system but as an actual transportation system
- Waterfront is challenged as transit corridor as it is one sided – more transit ridership if it feeds from both sides of the street

#### **Neighborhood perspective – neighborhood services – family services – that would support residents?**

- Residents are important to making vital downtown neighborhoods
- Discussed schools – need to look at the larger downtown area to provide some of these services

#### **Integration of monorail in waterfront planning?**

- Relying on increased transportation in the city
- Looking at King Street and Westlake as transit hubs
- looking at changing bus routes to provide east-west connections that connect with pedestrian overpasses

- Looking at multiple trolley options
- need to make all of the transportation systems that we have work well together
- Could have talked more about the monorail in discussion groups
- Need to make the transportation hubs feel more connected to the waterfront

**Environmental issues are tied to environmental justice issues**

- Urban design group discussed heterogeneity of uses and users

**Wayfinding is extremely important to the waterfront – opportunity at West Seattle Bridge for wayfinding to the waterfront**

- Want heterogeneity and different areas of the waterfront
- Other elements should be recurring such as wayfinding

**BNSF tracks? University St as an important location – bus tunnel stop, BNSF crossing, monorail station**

- Not looked at University specifically
- Good idea to link all transportation systems as much as possible
- Have looked at moving the railroad tracks, but is major rail connection
- Sculpture garden will provide an opportunity to cross the tracks at north of waterfront

**Working waterfront?**

- Importance of cargo movement – export as well as incoming goods and processing jobs – working waterfront includes container facility cruise ships ferries etc

**Space for water dependant uses with flexibility for future changes in use?**

- Deep harbor port facility is very rare
- Combined Seattle and Tacoma is 3<sup>rd</sup> largest container facility in the country
- Some feel should not let go of land that is in container use because will never replace it
- Some want to allow current volume of trade but want to devote as little land to this use as possible
- Terminal 46 is critical part of container function
- Could shift to terminals 25 and 30 –previously in container use but not currently
- Very few people searching for technological solutions
- There are ports in Asia that handle more volume in a smaller space
- May need to be search for technical solutions – not more land
- Look at viaduct configurations and how they connect to city streets –especially if terminal 46 is redeveloped
- Tail track where trains sit could be problematic for access to the terminal
- What does it mean to be the number one port?
- How does that impact livability?
- Good design will stand the test of time – pedestrian connections will always be valuable – transportation corridors can be used in different ways as transportation modes evolve
- Facing changing future changing demographics – need places that promote active living by design – not just for seniors, but for all ages
- Recently held a tri-port meeting with Rotterdam and Cobay
- All three cities are debating trade-offs between land for cargo uses and land for other community uses
- This discussion is not just in Seattle but all waterfront cities

## **Deputy Mayor Tim Ceis**

- Mayor Nickels was presented with a broken viaduct when he came into office
- Progress has been made in building consensus that this is the number one transportation priority in the state
- Now the question is what we do we do about it
- The viaduct replacement project is as important as the Denny regrade was 100 years ago
- 50 years ago we made a bad decision
- We cut ourselves off from the waterfront and from the city's birthplace
- We let the waterfront get away from us and now we need to take it back
- We need to question if we are building a city to serve the transportation system, or building a transportation system to serve the city

## **The Interests of Youth and the Waterfront**

Students from the Center School

### **Youth in the Margins**

- Want free activities
- Activities for residents
- Space for art
- Access to the water
- Parking
- Maps and information
- Eliminate unsafe areas

### **Youth who love nature**

- Extend Myrtle Edwards to pier 70
- Bike trail through waterfront that connects to Burke-Gilman
- Daylight beach area in front of apartments
- Connect Pike Place to the water
- Lid the Battery Street tunnel

### **Young People at the Center School**

- Want more public art
- places to hear music
- Pier with library and art museum
- Variety of restaurants
- Area to bike and run
- Revitalized ferries
- Transitional and affordable housing to address homelessness
- Incorporate the needs of homeless in designing waterfront plan

## **Summary of ideas from the 5 Discussion Groups: Common themes and areas of conflict**

John Rahaim, Department of Planning and Development

### **Common themes**

- East west connections
  - Connecting the city to the waterfront
  - Viaduct not only barrier – topography, train, etc
- Diversity of uses and 18 hour activity in the central part of the waterfront
- Public access to the waterfront
- Authenticity
  - Uses that are useful to people who live and work on the waterfront will still attract tourists
  - Should not design just for tourists
  - Pike Place as example of use that serves residents and is also the number one tourist attraction
- Waterfront that is unique to Seattle
  - Unique natural properties – high tide change – deep port
  - Combination of intense urban uses with intense natural conditions
- Improve waterside habitat
- Integrate different modes of transportation and separate modes that need to be separated
- Waterfront is not one thing
  - Several different places
  - Four distinct areas
- Increase public open space on the waterfront
- Maintain through access for goods along the waterfront
- Determine which things on the waterfront should not change and develop a framework for building around them
- Waterfront should be for everyone
- Waterfront must have a variety of amenities
  - Public restrooms
  - Places to sit
  - Restaurants

### **Conflicts**

- Through traffic
  - SDOT and WSDOT assume that waterfront should continue to function as a through traffic corridor
  - Others feel this is not good use of the waterfront
- Over-water coverage
  - Conflict for salmon due to shading which creates habitat for predators
  - Many feel that it is critical to preserve the piers
- Water-dependant uses
  - Reserve what we have
  - Vs. encourage broader range of uses and more intensive uses
- Range of uses vs. ecological environment
- Seawall
  - Rebuild in current form
  - Vs. bury seawall for habitat improvement

- Need to accommodate auto related uses
  - Cars getting onto ferries etc
  - Vs. pedestrian oriented edge to the waterfront
- Dictate precise location of uses vs. constant change of waterfront over time
- Urban character vs. natural habitat
- Level of density and amount of development
  - Keep restrictions to preserve views
  - Vs. allow more development to create more activity
- Parking
  - Some feel there should be no parking on the waterfront and instead should make better connections to inland parking
  - Others are concerned about maintaining parking on the waterfront
- People who live on the waterfront vs. people who come to play and work

## **Conclusion/Wrap**

- Keep all these ideas in mind as you join us this afternoon
- Interactive Session will explore in small groups what it means to be a user of the Waterfront
- Boat Tour of Elliott Bay at the end of the day – hope you all can join us for that.

## **Interactive Session: Everyday Experience meets up with Expert Opinion**

### **People at the Margins**

Facilitator: Don Royse; Scribe: Dennis Meier; Resource Persons: Urban Design: Barb Swift;  
Environment:

#### **People at the Margins are...**

Homeless, Low-income people of all ages (retired/fixed income), Recent immigrant, People with limited English, Minorities – racial, gender, ethnic, age, young adults, youth-parentless, small children, Individuals with disabilities, mental and physical, "Car-less" people, People in need of subsidized human services, Existing residents (lack of services), Small business owners in the area, Those who can't afford to live here, Independent artists, Unemployed, Street vendors

#### **Summary statement who we are & why we are here**

People – residents and employees who aren't being adequately served

People who are not permanent, not connected, need assistance, not invited

#### **Goal: Statements for Charrette Teams**

Considerations and things to resolve for People at the Margins:

- Consider the waterfront as a civic place for the full spectrum of the community because this will best serve people at the margins
- Consider sophisticated interaction with social service providers to help address the needs of those at the margins
- Consider the provision of 18 hour, low-cost and free activities to ensure an active and safe environment



- Consider the provision of frequent, safer, more pleasant and convenient pedestrian and transit access between the waterfront and surrounding neighborhoods
- Consider broadly distributed access to water activities, experiences, interaction (clean and safe)
- Consider minimizing motorized traffic on the surface (may indicate tunnel) to benefit everyone, especially people at the margins
- Consider providing places for people to sit, rest, people watch, and use public restroom facilities

#### **Who needs to be at the Table to Address These Statements?**

Social service providers, Church organizations, People at the margins and advocates, Neighborhood representatives, Area businesses, Transportation planners, Designers of quality public spaces

### **People on the Move**

Facilitator: Tory Laughlin Taylor; Scribe: Scott Dvorak;

Resource Persons: Environment: Heather Trim; Economic Development: Herald Ugles

#### **People on the Move are...**

Ferry workers, Kitsap community commuters, Area residents (regional tourist). Place identifiers, Freight expeditors, Walkers/pedestrians, Where water and city meet, Bike riders, Transit rides – through downtown, Vehicles – through downtown, Commuters to Bainbridge, Pedestrians looking for east/west connection, Downtown residents need for open space, First time visitors to Seattle, need for wayfinding, Port workers/Maritime/Trade – deep water port, connection to world working waterfront, functional, Water as open space

#### **Goal: Statements for Charrette Teams**

Considerations and things to resolve for People on the Move:

- Better east/west connections, including aesthetics (10 dots)
- Transit – to and through (including waterfront route), (9 dots)
- Public art, cultural identifier (9 dots, 2 of them for Historic)
- Reopen Washington St pier (7 dots)
- Grade separation of trains/autos/vehicles (4 dots)
- Consistency/predictability for auto and pedestrian ferry users (2 dots)
- Resolve noise issues– minimize the noise barrier (1 dot)
- Water taxi, waterside transit (1 dot)
- Historic wayfinding, use pier numbers (1 dot)
- Non-motorized water vehicles
- Water as open space
- Consider a dedicated route to ensure safety for non-auto users
- Historic, Ecological, Wayfinding, Educational (visitors, children)
- Non-motorized transportation route with historic elements

#### **Resolve issues to better enable east-west connections**

- Change transit routes, coordinate with ferry schedule (1 dot)
- Metro plus other options
- Enhance pedestrian experience (Green Streets) (1 dot)
- Directions to hill climb assistance, improve signage (1 dot)

- Improve scary dark areas under viaduct
- Landscaping
- Bike lanes – east west
- Grade separation (1 dot)

**Consider providing transit to and through**

- Streetcar – adequate right of way to become a stronger transit option. Broaden its use less localized. (1 dot)
- Fare integration (1 dot)
- Waterfront taxi along waterfront (1 dot)
- Circulator – short range (2 dots)
- Connection to transportation hubs
- Route information

**Consider the inclusion of cultural identifiers**

- Continuous non-motorized waterfront way with interpretive elements, both icons and part of the design
- Cultural walk
- Ecologic
- Sculptural
- Cleaning up existing wayfinding (1 dot)
- Expanding wayfinding (1 dot)

**Consider water as open space**

- Water as the main attraction, unifying theme
- Views
- Direct access for pedestrians to the water surface [A] Steps to water [B] Floating facilities [C] Seawall (2 dots)
- Replace Washington St Pier (2 dots)
- Rooftop gardens
- Kids play areas
- Floating facilities
- Open street ends to water (1 dot)
- Jack Perry Memorial Park reopened (1 dot)
- Uses of the pier buildings (1 dot)
- Reduce vehicular access on waterfront

**Nature Lovers**

Facilitator: George Blomberg Scribe: Jim Holmes

Resource Persons: Economic Development: Transportation: Leslie Bain

**Nature Lovers are....**

Viewers, fishers/squidders, beach walkers, ferry riders, kayakers, conservationists, environmental activists, tourists, urban workers, Audubon, Native Americans, wildlife, residents.

**Goal: Statements for Charrette Teams**

Considerations and things to resolve for Nature Lovers:

- Consider opportunities for youth to experience nature/city

- Consider Sustainable development (new & redevelopment)
- Cruise ships comply with letter and (?) of law, marine users & activities
- Consider the strong value of the interconnection between natural environment and civic life
- Consider sustainability in both the big picture and details
- Include environmental benefits in evaluation of long-term and short-term costs.
- Illustrate potential compelling future scenarios and the benefits they offer
- Think long-term
- Challenge development paradigm of what a world-class city is

## **People out for Fun**

Facilitator: Jeanne Krikawa; Scribe: Barbara Wilson

Resource Persons: Transportation: Ron Scheck; Neighborhoods: Catherine Stanford

### **People out for Fun are...**

Young people, skateboarders, joggers, kayakers, tourists, families, bicyclists, diners, music lovers, dog walkers, ferry riders, view-seekers, romancers (all senses), activists, outdoor lovers, indoor action seeking, water lovers, beachcombers, trolley riders, cocktail happy hour, photographers, ship watchers, cruise boat tourists, para-gliders.

### **Summary statement who we are & why we are here**

- Many people who are here to experience the waterfront in a variety of ways
- Seeking activities, experiences, reflections

### **Goal: Statements for Charrette Teams**

Considerations and things to resolve for People out for Fun:

- Consider integrating public art
- Consider providing excellent wayfinding to downtown and neighborhood destinations
- Resolve transportation conflict between vehicles, people and bikes, etc.
- Resolve east-west conflicts – connectivity!
- Resolve physical challenges of getting to and touching the water. Need to consider current uses, environmental regulations (mitigation).
- Consider how we design/define getting to water
- Resolve challenges in creating different experiences
- Resolve the conflict between current property owners and users (zoning), design guidelines
- Consider how to serve locals and experiences for various climates, serve
- Consider extending waterfront character to east neighborhoods, connectivity (Pioneer Square, Belltown, Pike Place)
- Consider definition of authenticity/diversity, preserve character
- East of viaduct, neighborhoods meet waterfront
- Augment adjacency to neighborhoods
- Design should build on adjacent neighborhoods
- Belltown – residential, nightlife, restaurant. Resolve connectivity challenges to Belltown
- Resolve conflict with (?) and current regulatory framework
- Resolve multi modal conflicts
- Consider small area, how do you create separate modes
- Resolve issues of use, built environment issues in creating wild spaces
- Resolve issues of natural/wild versus urban experience. Hard to create wild in urban dense areas

- Consider how to create a space in a very urban area to have a place of respite, green area
- Consider resolving challenge of wild versus urban places by looking at scale. Look at areas for opportunity to create natural open spaces.
- Consider creating places of refuge
- Consider a 18 – 24 hour days waterfront that is alive and adds a place of vibrancy
- Resolve the challenges of the transition in creating 24 hour day

## Young People

Facilitator: Frances Nelson; Scribe: Layne Cubell; Resource Persons: Urban Design: Michael Woodland; Neighborhoods: Milenko Matanovic

### Young People are...

People from Birth to age 25 including many subgroups: toddler/pre-school, elementary, high school, young adults, with different needs and wants.

### Goal: Statements for Charrette Teams

Considerations and things to resolve for Young People:

- Consider multi-purpose/adaptable spaces (all seasons)
- Consider social spaces; places to see and be seen
- Consider places to touch, experience & explore the water, nature & wilderness (ex: green spaces, saltwater pools, beach)
- Consider dedicated spaces for performances/music/visual art (ex: graffiti)
- Consider needs/wants of different and diverse age groups (shared and separate).
- Encourage exploration\_(5 dots)
- Resolve new additions as compared to refinements
- Consider the need for parents/supervisors to participate, monitor, watch (4 dots)
- Consider separation of spaces for different ages (eg: playground) at different times
- Consider the needs of very young
- Resolve differences between occasional and repeat visits
- Consider all seasons activities, a single place versus many, like a gazebo/greenhouse (7 dots)

### Who should come to a charette for youth

- Center school
- Teachers
- Young graffiti arts group
- Parent groups (ex: Hip Mama)
- Young Designers
- Kids/youth
- Local daycare centers
- Youth counselors
- YMCA/YWCA, Boys & Girls Club
- Youth arts and science groups
- Vera project